



Jesus Washes the Disciples' Feet

(based on John 13:1-17)

It was just before the Passover festival. Jesus knew that soon he would have to leave his disciples and go to be with God. Jesus loved his friends. They had been traveling together for a long time.

One night, they gathered for a special meal. Everyone was tired and hungry. They all sat at the table. They wondered who was going to wash their feet. After walking along hot, dusty roads, their feet were sweaty and dirty.

Jesus got up from the table and wrapped a towel around his waist as a servant would have done. He poured some water into a bowl and began to wash one of his friends' feet! Then he dried them off with the towel.

The disciples looked at Jesus and looked at each other. They were shocked. Only the lowest servants in the household washed the feet of guests. They could not believe that Jesus was washing their feet like a servant.

One by one, Jesus washed each of the disciples' feet. Then it was Peter's turn. Peter looked at him and said:

"Jesus, are you really going to wash my feet?"

"You don't understand what I am doing," Jesus answered. "I'm teaching you something very important."

"I can't let you wash my feet," protested Peter. "They're so dirty. This is a job for a servant."

"Peter, if you don't let me wash your feet, you can't follow me," replied Jesus.

So Peter let Jesus wash his feet.

Jesus finished washing everyone's feet. He explained that he wanted to teach them an important lesson about friendship.

"No one is better than anyone else," explained Jesus. "If I can serve you, then you can serve each other. Follow me and do what I do."



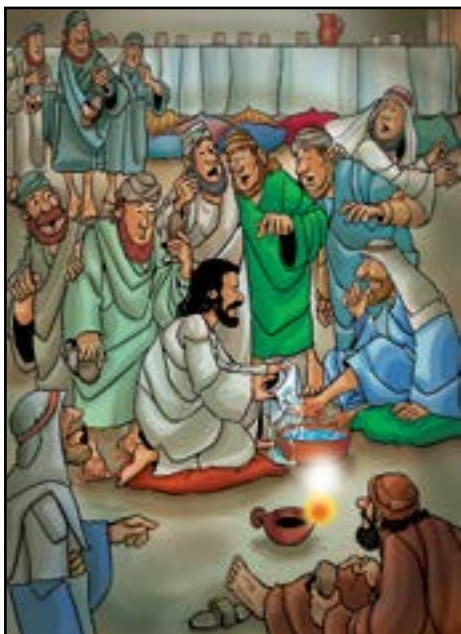
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Use one or more activities from each section to explore grace and gratitude with your children this week.

Recognizing God's Grace

- Read and enjoy the story with your children—imagine and wonder.
- When Jesus' friends were tired, Jesus washed their feet. What do we do for our family and friends when they are tired?
- Whose feet would you wash? Who would you allow to wash your feet?



Responding to God's Grace

- Spread newspapers on the floor. Make footprint art by putting paint on your children's feet and pressing them onto the paper. Let that image be the basis for a picture. See what emerges through your creativity. After the project, clean up by washing feet!
- Be a servant. Let every person in the family have a turn cleaning a sink in your house.
- Choose an organization that gives shoes for those in need, and arrange to take part in their work by donating shoes or money.

Celebrating in Gratitude

- Put on some peppy music. Give everyone an old pair of socks. Dampen the socks, and dance on the kitchen floor, cleaning as you go.
- Did you know that a foot has twenty-six bones and even more tendons and ligaments? All of these help our feet do their job. Look up other facts about feet, and wonder that God provided us with such a functional part of our bodies.
- Trace around the feet of every person in your family. Cut out the shapes and lay them out in a circle. Glue them together to make a wreath to hang on your family's door. A possible caption is, "Our family serves."
- Pray this prayer:

Lord Jesus, you loved your disciples so much that you washed and soothed their tired feet. Help us to know your loving and soothing presence in our lives. Amen.